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Letter dated 28 August 2000 from the President of Liberia addressed to the Secretary-General

I extend compliments on behalf of the people of Liberia and in my own name to you on the occasion of the convocation of the Millennium Summit, where leaders of the world would be expected to define problems besetting our global family and determine solutions in the alleviation of those problems, engendering hope in the future of our one world and carving new aspirations for the United Nations. Against this background, I am pleased to acquaint you with the current status of Liberia's engagement in Sierra Leone, a troubled portion of our global village.

You may recall the commitment of the Government of Liberia to remain constructively engaged in the resolution of the crisis in the sisterly country of Sierra Leone. Recently, our involvement, among other things, culminated in the release of over 500 United Nations peacekeepers who were unfortunately held against their will by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Our Government will continue to be steadfastly bound to an immediate, peaceful and diplomatic solution to the crisis in Sierra Leone as well as the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the subregion, and will continue to offer public and practical expressions to these endeavours.

However, the apparent silence of the international community to the repeated violations of our territorial integrity by armed insurgents from the area of the Guinea-Sierra Leone borders, including a third and most recent attack emanating from the Republic of Guinea, which is ongoing, continues to overburden the Liberian Government with unnecessary loss of lives and property and the displacement of a large number of our people. It is the request of the Government of Liberia that you utilize all forms of influence at your disposal to ensure the sanctity of our borders and the maintenance of peace, security and stability within the framework of the Mano River Union.

As the inviolability of the borders between Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone remains a crucial issue, I recommend the following and request the support of the United Nations in ensuring their speedy implementation:

(a) The Government of Liberia again calls for a monitoring presence of the United Nations at these borders to monitor all crossing points capable of conveying vehicular traffic. We recognize the enormous cost to individual nations of policing the entire length of the borders and suggest the utilization of an airborne multi-spectral service in detection of any unusual movements along the entire border.

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Intelligence gathered therefrom could be shared by all appropriate authorities. The cost, which is relatively minor, could be borne by the international community;

(b) On the status of RUF, as has been previously done, the Liberian Government has again called for the immediate disarmament and simultaneous deployment of troops from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) under the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in areas recently considered as RUF-dominated.

Along these lines, RUF has announced a new leadership acceptable to ECOWAS and has informed ECOWAS through its Chairman that it welcomes our call for disarmament and demobilization and that it has begun the process leading to its transformation to a political entity and subsequent reintegration into society. Additionally, RUF has informed ECOWAS of its wish to return weapons retrieved from United Nations peacekeepers and its desire to establish communication with the High Command of UNAMSIL, to facilitate and accelerate the return of the weapons and the process of confidence-building.

In keeping therewith, it is our recommendation that these initiatives be immediately exploited by the United Nations, leading to a ceasefire; the withdrawal of all belligerent forces to positions as at 7 July 1999; the simultaneous deployment of ECOWAS troops, under UNAMSIL; and the total disarmament and demobilization of the armed factions.

You are doubtlessly aware of our unreserved support for Security Council resolution 1306 (2000), calling for an end to the smuggle of diamonds from Sierra Leone. As evidence of this, we are undertaking several initiatives, including the enactment of a statute criminalizing the export of undocumented or uncertificated diamonds; the enforcement of legislation requiring the Central Bank of Liberia to issue certificates of origin; and our request to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to second experts who would assist in the development of a transparent process. Furthermore, the Government calls for assistance from the international community to convene a meeting of international experts to focus on the trade and certification process in the Mano River Union countries.

The Government of Liberia assures you of its continued commitment to the pursuit of peace and stability both at home and in the subregion and welcomes the convening of this Summit with hope and anticipation for the evolution of solutions that will make our world a safer place for our children.

Finally, I wish to request that you kindly circulate the present letter to all members of the Security Council as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Dahkpannah Dr. Charles Ghankay **Taylor**